

Storm Water Utility

Mission. The Storm Water Utility is responsible for construction, reconstruction and maintenance of the City's storm water drainage system, including storm sewers, catch basins, streams, and drainage-ways. The Utility is also responsible for ensuring the City's compliance with water quality provisions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

Overview. The Storm Water Utility is a division of the Public Works Department and is involved in all the City's drainage issues.

Storm Water maintenance crews clean and maintain 400 miles of storm sewers, 15,000 catch basins, and 130 miles of drainage ditches annually. Storm sewers are cleaned and televised to assess condition and repair needs. Catch basins are cleaned and repairs are made when needed. Erosion repairs are made to drainage ditches and banks are stabilized as required. A private vendor provides contractual mowing of ditches and drains.

The City has six pump stations that are instrumental in moving excess water in times of heavy rains or flooding. The Utility is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the pump stations.

The Utility is responsible for the design and construction of drainage capital projects approved in the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP). In addition, the Utility investigates drainage concerns from citizens and determines possible solutions. A budget of \$400,000 annually is available for repair of "hot spots", or neighborhood drainage problems.

The Storm Water Utility drafted a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Ordinance, adopted by the City Council on December 22, 1998, to aid the City in complying with NPDES regulations. The Utility provides NPDES compliance education and has responsibility for all components of the City's drainage system including the maintenance and cleaning of all streets, roads, and roadside ditches. It is also responsible for submitting an annual report to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) documenting compliance with the NPDES permit.

The Utility monitors construction sites in the City to ensure compliance with the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Ordinance. All sites must use Best Management Practices (BMP) to ensure that erosion sediment or chemicals do not enter the drainage system, increasing pollution in streams and rivers. Industrial sites in the City are monitored to ensure compliance. Water sampling and testing is

performed to show trends in amounts and types of pollutants present.



Storm water inlet protected from construction site erosion sediment.

Departments that work or make inspections in and around the drainage system assist with enforcement of the ordinance. The Utility provides education and coordination of cooperating departments including Police, Fire, Central Inspection, Public Works, Park, and Health.

Finance and Operations. Storm Water Utility operations are funded with fees from property owners in the City. The fee is determined by the number of equivalent residential units (ERU). One ERU is the average amount of impervious area (rooftops and pavement) for a typical residence; therefore, the fee for all single family dwellings is based on one ERU. Businesses and industrial site fees are based on the number of ERUs on the property.

When the Utility was formed in 1993, the ERU rate was set at \$1.66 per month. Revenues generated by ERU fees were projected to cover basic maintenance of the storm drainage system, storm sewer rehabilitation, hot spot repairs, and capital drainage projects. In 1996, the ERU fee was reduced to \$1.21. The 27 percent decrease forced reductions in maintenance operations and capital projects originally planned for the Utility. Operational reductions as a result of the rate decrease included the loss of an inlet cleaning crew and associated equipment, seven seasonal positions, and the contracted inlet and stream rehabilitation program. Projected remaining revenue was insufficient to ensure future bond payments; therefore, additional bond financing of capital projects was no longer feasible.

Expenditures are outpacing revenues, causing the fund balance to decrease each year. To maintain current operations without decreasing the fund balance further, the 2000 Adopted Budget includes a \$0.06 ERU rate increase,

for a total ERU of \$1.27. The additional revenue produced by the increase allows continuation of \$400,000 annual funding for the Hot Spots program. The ERU increase will not produce sufficient revenue to reinstate funding for storm sewer rehabilitation to address failing storm sewer lines in older neighborhoods.

Capital drainage improvements of \$1.5 million annually are funded over the next 10 years, with debt service payments budgeted in the Utility. The 2000-2009 CIP funds almost \$33 million in drainage system improvements from non-utility funds. Even with this significant commitment, over \$22 million in capital drainage projects are not funded. An ERU increase of \$0.04 is required to service each additional \$1 million in bonded debt.

Pump Station #1 requires major rehabilitation to remain operational. This pump station is instrumental in protecting Towne West Mall and surrounding areas from potential flooding. The 1999 Revised Budget includes \$435,000 for this work to be funded from Utility reserves.

Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) flood maps, identifying the 100-year flood plain, were last updated in 1986. Any changes in the flood plain in the last thirteen years are not reflected in the maps. The adopted budget shares the \$250,000 cost to update maps with Storm Water and Central Inspection.

The Utility currently responds to requests for flood determination for specified properties. Because of the staff time involved in responding to these requests, the Utility is researching the availability of alternative sources for this information. An alternative is to charge a cost recovery fee to individuals requesting this service.

Recent and future annexations will further challenge the Utility's resources for system maintenance. Maintenance of the growing infrastructure will eventually require additional personnel and equipment.

Financial Summary Storm Water Utility (in thousands)			
	1998	1999	2000
ERU Fees	4,798	4,939	5,192
General Fund subsidy	515	515	515
Interest/Other	245	338	264
Revenue - All Sources	5,558	5,792	5,970

Major Service Levels			
	1998	1999	2000
Miles of storm sewers cleaned	114	130	130
Number of inlets cleaned	36,065	45,000	45,000
Number of manholes & inlets repaired	133	300	300

Storm Water Utility Budget Summary					
	1998 Actual	1999 Adopted	1999 Revised	2000 Adopted	2001 Approved
Storm Water Utility Revenue	5,557,829	5,317,270	5,792,030	5,970,010	6,002,280
Personal Services	1,204,515	1,493,120	1,371,390	1,529,390	1,642,890
Contractual Services	1,283,217	819,470	1,562,010	1,105,860	901,250
Commodities	112,944	230,660	211,890	211,890	211,890
Capital Outlay	89,574	198,000	198,000	202,100	50,680
Other	3,164,703	2,938,100	4,017,960	3,185,500	3,167,450
Total Storm Water Utility Expenditures	5,854,953	5,679,350	7,361,250	6,234,740	5,974,160
Revenue Over (Under) Expenditures	(297,124)	(362,080)	(1,569,220)	(264,730)	28,120
Storm Water Utility Fund Balance	5,596,055	3,716,413	4,026,835	3,762,105	3,790,225
Position Summary					
Total full-time	37	37	37	37	37
Total part-time	0	0	0	0	0
Total FTE	37	37	37	37	37